

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

MISSION STATEMENT

- Delivers a series of services to eligible veterans and their families; and
- Unifies the veteran community by building alliances to enhance financial resources available to the community.

The Department of Veterans Services will accomplish this by:

- informing the veteran population and their families about all veterans' benefits;
- assisting veterans and their families in establishing any right or benefit accruing to them;
- obtaining employment preferences authorized by law;
- acting as guardian of a veteran or as conservator of the estate of a protected veteran

To accomplish the above we recognize the need to:

- develop and maintain a professional staff assuring that each employee has available the opportunities for personal and professional growth through training, education, and career development;
- maintain field offices located throughout Arizona for direct assistance;
- inform Arizona veterans and their dependents of entitlements using all available mass news media.

We believe the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services has the managerial and operational responsibility to be accountable to all veterans and the public. In pursuit of this obligation, we will maintain open lines of communication.

We place a high priority on quality services to the veterans of Arizona, and we value honesty and integrity in our relationships with them.

These beliefs are achievable to the extent that the resources necessary for their accomplishment are provided to the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services.

PURPOSE OF PAMPHLET

Veteran benefits programs have grown more complex during the past few years. It is virtually impossible to remember all of the many programs and services available in the State of Arizona. Hopefully, you should find this pamphlet very helpful, and you may want to keep it handy for quick reference. This pamphlet is prepared in such a manner that, should the Arizona Legislature enact new laws which provide changes to a particular program, we will revise the pamphlet, thus keeping it current for you use.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), all Arizona Department of Veterans' Service sites are ADA accessible. Should you require special accommodations, please contact the Veterans office nearest you or call 1-800-852-VETS (8387) as soon as possible so the Department can respond in a timely manner to your request.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

TOLL FREE (Within Arizona) 1-800-852-VETS (8387)
General Information and Assistance (602) 627-3261

The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services is a state agency with offices located throughout Arizona that provides direct assistance in all matters pertaining to benefits and entitlements of veterans, their dependents and survivors. The Department is responsible to apprise veterans and their families residing in Arizona of the federal and state benefits available to them. The Department's staff offers Professional services.

The Central Offices of the Department located at 3333 North Central Avenue, Suite 1052, Phoenix, Arizona 85012. General information and assistance can be obtained by calling 1-800-852-VETS from within Arizona or (602) 627-3261.

The Department shall:

- a) Disseminate information relating to laws beneficial to veterans and to assist veterans, dependents and survivors in establishing any right or benefit to which they are entitled.
- b) Act as guardian or conservator of incapacitated veterans, minor children and surviving spouses.
- c) Assist in obtaining employment preferences authorized by law.
- d) Contact and enter into agreements with the United States or any political subdivision thereof and with veterans' organizations.
- e) Approve and disapprove courses of study offered by the educational institutions or business establishments in accordance with Title 38, U.S. Code and state regulations. A.R.S. § 41-602.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Governor of Arizona appoints seven commissioners. Each member shall serve a term of three years.

Commissioners appointed by the Governor of Arizona provide policy advice to the Governor and Director regarding veteran issues.

- a) Members shall be veterans and shall be appointed from a list of three names submitted by each veteran's organization.
- b) Members shall not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.
- c) Members are not eligible to receive compensation, but are eligible for reimbursement of expenses pursuant to Title 38, Chapter 4, Article 2, A.R.S. § 41 – 602.

VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION

As described in the Mission Statement, a network of Veterans Benefits Counselors (VBC"s) provide information, counsel and assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors in matters pertaining to federal and state benefits earned by honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States. Veterans Benefits Counselors reach into all fifteen counties of the state. The Division Service Offices are located in Flagstaff, Lake Havasu City, Phoenix, Prescott, Sierra Vista, Tucson, and Yuma.

Functions of Veterans Services Division:

1. Furnish an explanation of all laws granting benefits to veterans, their dependents, or their survivors which will clearly demonstrate in understandable terms the issues involved.
2. Provide assistance to claimants in the proper preparation of their claims.
3. Advise and assist claimants in the procurement and preparation of documents or other evidence when required.
4. Explain decisions rendered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Advise dissatisfied claimants of their right to appeal and assist in the development of such an appeal. Appear with the claimant to present oral argument before a VA hearing board and/or the Traveling Section of the Board of Veterans' Appeals.
5. Assist veterans when applying for regular or emergency admission to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals.
6. Assist veterans in establishing eligibility for various benefits for which the state's veterans are eligible; i.e., employment preferences, hunting and fishing licenses, property tax and license tax exemptions, and special license plates.
7. Maintain liaison with local offices of all governmental agencies and all local veterans' organizations.
8. Address veteran issues to any interested community group.

The staff of each office consists of Veterans Benefits Counselors and the appropriate administrative support. Veterans Benefit Counselors are accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and certified as proficient by the State of Arizona to assist the state's rapidly growing veteran population.

ENTITLEMENT AND SERVICES

BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS

BURIAL

When a veteran or a surviving spouse dies without sufficient means for funeral expenses, the County Board of Supervisors is responsible to ensure that burial will not be in a portion of ground used exclusively for burial of paupers. A suitable plot will be used, and the county may apply to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for expenses not to exceed \$150.00 A.R.S. § 11- 313.

HEADSTONES

When the county buries an indigent veteran, the county clerk will make an application to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for a suitable headstone and make arrangements for it to be placed at the head of the grave. A.R.S. § 11 - 312.

CIVIL RIGHTS

VOTING IN ELECTIONS

Absentee registration and voting by active duty military personnel and their eligible dependents residing out of state may be accomplished by prior to 7:00 p.m. on an Election Day. The County recorder may accept a federal postcard application in lieu of an affidavit of registration. A. R.S. § 16 -103.

DOCUMENTS

RECORDING OF DISCHARGES

Any county recorder, free of charge shall record military discharge papers. Location of each County Recorder's Office may be found in the blue pages of your area telephone directory. A.R.S. § 11 - 465.

PUBLIC RECORD CERTIFICATION

Public officials shall issue without charge, certified copies of public records for use in making a claim for pension, compensation, allotment allowance, insurance, or other benefits from the United States. A. R.S. § 39 -122 (A).

EDUCATION

TUITION AND FEES-DEFERRED PAYMENT

A veteran or eligible dependent who has applied for educational benefits under the G.I. Bill state-supported community colleges, colleges and universities may defer payment of tuition, fees and required books for a period of 120 days with no interest charges. If, at the end of such period, the person has not received from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs the initial benefit monies for tuition and fees, an extension may be granted until such time benefits are received. A. R.S. § 41 - 611.

EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCES

AGE LIMIT

An honorably discharged veteran shall be eligible for employment preference, rights, and privileges under any merit system in the state in the state or any political subdivision thereof, regardless of age, if otherwise qualified. A.R.S. § 38 - 491.

CIVIL SERVICE

Veterans who pass an examination for employment by the state, county or city will have 5 points added to their certification score. The veteran must have served for more than six (6) months and be separated under honorable conditions. Veterans entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability will have 10 points added to their certification score. Certain spouses or surviving spouses shall be given a 5 point preference if the veteran died of a service-connected disability: or as a member of the armed forces serving on active duty is (a) missing in action, (b) captured, or (c) forcibly detained or interned by a foreign power; or has total and permanent service-connected disability, or who died while such disability was in force. A.R.S. § 38 - 492.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Members of any fire company inducted into the military establishment of the United States for military training are authorized reinstatement to their previous rating after discharge from military service. A.R.S. § 9 - 971.

The period of military service shall be included in computing the length of service of the fireman to determine eligibility for retirement. A.R.S. § 9 - 970.

POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT

The period of military service shall be included in computing the length of service of the employee to determine eligibility for retirement. A.R.S. § 9 - 933.

RESERVE STATUS/WAR EMERGENCY

Appointive officers or employees of the state or of a political subdivision will be reinstated to their former position upon completion of military service to which (s) he was inducted or ordered during time of war or was called to service because of their status as an active or inactive member of the Reserves. A. R.S. § 38 - 298.

CREDIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE FOR STATE RETIREMENT BENEFITS

A participant of the state system or plan may receive credited past service or future service for active military service if the participant was honorably discharge from service. The period of military service for which the participant receives credited service is not on account with any other retirement system. Contact the nearest state personnel office for additional information and eligibility. A. R.S. § 43 -1022 (2) (a).

FIDUCIARY SERVICES

If fiduciary services as guardian of a veteran, conservator of a veteran's estate or both is needed; the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services is authorized by A.R.S. sect. 41-605 to provide these services. For more specific information regarding veteran fiduciary programs, contact the Fiduciary Division at (602) 248-1554.

TAX AND LICENSE FEE EXEMPTIONS

ADDITIONAL EXEMPTIONS

1. To the extent not already excluded from Arizona gross income under set. 112 of the Internal Revenue Code, compensation received for active service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for any month during any part of which members served in a combat zone is exempt. A. R.S. § 43 -1022 (19).
2. Federal (Civil Service or Military Retirement) payments up to \$2,500.00 per year are exempt. A.R.S. § 43-1022 (2) (a).

NOTE: Contact the Arizona Department of Revenue (1-800-845-8192) for any veteran tax issues.

PROPERTY TAX

Exemption for property of widows, widowers, and disabled persons.
A.R.S. § 42 -11111.

- A. The property of widows, widowers, and disabled persons who are residents of this state is exempt from taxation to the extent allowed by Article IX § 2, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3, Constitution of Arizona, and subject to the conditions and limitations prescribed by this section.
- B. Pursuant to article IX, § 2.3, Constitution of Arizona, the exemptions from taxation under this section are allowed in the amount of:
 1. Three thousand dollars if the person's total assessment does not exceed ten thousand dollars.
 2. No exemption if the person's total assessment exceeds ten thousand dollars.

- C. For the purpose of determining the amount of the allowable exemption pursuant to subsection B, the person's total assessment shall not include the value of any vehicle that is taxed under Title 28, Chapter 16, Article 3.
- D. Pursuant to Article IX, § 2.3, Constitution of Arizona, to qualify for this exemption, the total income from all sources of the claimant and the claimant's spouse and the income from all sources of all of the claimant's children who resided with the claimant in the claimant's residence in the year immediately preceding the year for which the claimant applies for the exemption shall not exceed:
1. Thirteen thousand two hundred dollars if none of the claimant's children under eighteen years of age resided with the claimant in the claimant's residence.
 2. Eighteen thousand eight hundred forty dollars if one or more of the claimant's children residing with the claimant in the claimant's residence was either:
 - (a) Under eighteen years of age.
 - (b) Totally and permanently, physically or mentally disabled, as certified by competent medical authority as provided by law.

NOTE: The exemption is applied to real estate first, then to a mobile home or an automobile. Contact your County Assessor office for eligibility.

VEHICLE LICENSE TAX AND REGISTRATION FEES

No license tax or registration fee shall be collected from any veteran for a personally owned vehicle if such veteran is certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be one hundred percent service-connected disabled and drawing compensation on that basis. A. R.S. § 28 - 5802 A 2.

A veteran residing in Arizona shall be exempt from a vehicle license tax on a vehicle acquired by the veteran through financial aid from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. A. R. S. § 28 - 5802 A 1.

A veteran claiming an exemption prescribed by section shall present satisfactory proof of such U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs financial aid or government compensation and certificate of determination of one hundred percent disability, as applicable. Such exemption may be claimed and granted during each 12- month period for only one vehicle or any replacement of such vehicle owned by the veteran. A.R.S. § 28 - 5802 B.

NOTE: If spouse is listed on registration there will be a 50% charge to the veteran. Contact the nearest Motor Vehicle Division Office.

HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES

Resident hunting and fishing licenses for members of the armed forces on active duty, stationed in state are available upon application. Complimentary licenses may be granted to veterans 70 years or older who have been residents of this state for 25 years. Complimentary licenses will be issued to veterans verified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be one hundred percent service-connected disabled and who have been a resident for one year or more. A.R.S. § 17 - 336, 17 - 337.

NOTE: Contact the nearest Department of Game and Fish office.

ARIZONA STATE PARKS

Arizona State Parks Offers Complimentary “Disabled Veterans Annual Day Use Pass”.

(Phoenix, Arizona-February 27, 2004) – The Arizona State Parks department today announced from Fort Verde State Historic Park that the agency will be instituting a new program to provide Arizona’s 100% permanently disabled veterans with a “Disabled Veterans Annual Day Use pass”. The pass will provide qualified veterans with day use access to all twenty-seven State Parks.

The Disabled Veterans Annual Day Pass covers the park entrance fee, and is available to veterans who reside in the state of Arizona, are certified by the Veteran’s Administration as one hundred percent disabled, and draw compensation on that basis. Eligible veterans may request the application form from Arizona State Park’s central office at 1300 West Washington, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, (602) 542-4174, (long distance 1-800-285-3703) or fill out a Registration Form at www.azstateparks.com.

NOTE: For Parks and Camping for the National Parks, please call (620) 640-5250.

PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

Every funeral director, embalmer, or apprentice embalmer who serves in the armed forces during a time of war is exempt from paying renewal license fees for the duration of the war and six months thereafter or for a period of six months following discharge from the armed forces. A. R.S. § 32 -1335.

SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES

<http://www.dot.state.az.us/MVD/mvdplate.htm>

MEDAL OF HONOR

Any resident of Arizona who is a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor may apply for a distinctive number plate at no additional cost. A. R.S. § 28 -2452.

PRISONER OF WAR

Any resident of Arizona who is a former prisoner of war may apply for a distinctive number plate. An initial fee of \$15.00 is charged in addition to the registration fee with an annual renewal fee of \$5.00. A.R.S. § 28 - 2453.

PURPLE HEART

Any resident of Arizona who is a recipient of the Purple Heart may apply for a distinctive number plate. An initial fee of \$25.00 is charged in addition to the registration fee with an annual renewal fee of \$5.00. A.R.S. § 28 - 2454.

PEARL HARBOR SURVIVORS

Any resident of Arizona who was a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, received an honorable discharge, and was stationed at Pearl Harbor, the island of Oahu (or offshore not exceeding 3 miles), on December 7, 1941, during the hours of 7:55 A.M. to 9:45 A.M., is eligible for a Pearl Harbor distinctive number plate. An initial fee of \$25.00 is charged in addition to the registration fee with an annual renewal fee of \$5.00. A.R.S. § 28 – 2455.

NATIONAL GUARD

Any resident of Arizona who is or has been a member of the Arizona Air National Guard or Army National Guard may apply for a distinctive number plate. An initial and renewal fee of \$25.00 is charged in addition to the registration fee. A.R.S. § 28 - 2415.

VETERAN

Any resident of Arizona who was a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and received an honorable discharge may apply for a distinctive number plate. An initial and renewal fee of \$25.00 is charged in addition to the registration fee. A.R.S. § 28-2414.

(Most of the fee goes into a trust fund to provide for the operation and maintenance of the Arizona State Veterans Home program).

NOTE: Dependents may also be eligible for license plates. Disabled and personalized plates are \$50.00. Contact your nearest Motor Vehicles Division office.

TRANSPORTATION

Common carriers may give free or reduced rates to residents of homes for soldiers, and, with the consent of the Arizona Corporation Commission, to former soldiers and sailors for the purpose of attending any convention. A.R.S. § 40 – 335.

INSIGNIA

Unauthorized wearing or use of insignia, badges, etc., of veterans' organizations is a misdemeanor. A.R.S. § 10 – 2106.

VETERAN HOME

A resident of a veterans' or soldiers' home may wear the military uniform. A. R.S. § 26 – 170 (A).

ARIZONA STATE VETERAN HOME

The Arizona State Veteran Home is located in Phoenix at 4141 N. 3rd Street. It is a 200 bed, skilled care nursing facility operated and maintained by the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services. The Veteran Home offers different levels of nursing care and encourages residents to function at their highest level. The state – of the - art facility has been designed to be both functional and provide a pleasing environment with a southwest atmosphere. For more specific information about the Veteran Home, contact the Veteran Home Administrator at (602) 248-1550. A.R.S. § 41 – 603.01.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGIONAL OFFICE

3333 N. Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85012

1-800-827-1000

VA MEDICAL CENTERS

Carl T. Hayden Medical Center	650 E. Indian School Road Phoenix, AZ 85012	(602) 277-5551 1-800-359-8262
Casa Grande Extension Clinic	900 E. Florence Blvd., Suite H Casa Grande, AZ 85222	(520) 836-2536
Cottonwood Clinic	203 Candy Lane, Suite 5 B Cottonwood, AZ	(928) 649-1523
Flagstaff Bellemont Community Based Clinic	Navajo Depot Army Reserve center Bellmont, AZ 86015	1-800-949-1005 ext. 7820
Globe Extension Clinic	707 S. Broad Street Globe, AZ 85501	(928) 425-0027/8
Green Valley	38 West Hermosa Drive # 140 Green Valley, AZ 85614	(520) 629-4900 1-800-470-8262
Kingman VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic	1726 Beverly Avenue Kingman, AZ 86401	(928) 692-0080
Lake Havasu Clinic	2035 Mesquite, Suite E Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403	(928) 680-0090
Northwest Extension Clinic	10147 W. Grand Avenue Sun City, AZ 85351	(602) 222-2630
Payson Extension Clinic	1106 N. Beeline HWY Payson, AZ 85541	(928) 472-3148
Prescott VA Medical Center	500 Highway 89 North Prescott, AZ 86401	(928) 445-4860 1-800-949-1005
Safford Extension Clinic	Bureau of Land Mgt. Bldg. 711 S. 14 th Ave. Safford, AZ 85546	(520) 428-8010
Showlow Extension Clinic	2450 A. Showlow Lake Road Showlow, AZ 85091	(928) 532-1069
Sierra Vista VA Clinic	Army Med. Dept., Bldg 45006 Ft. Huachuca, AZ 85613	(520) 533-2526 1-800-470-8262
Southeast Extension Clinic	6001 Power Road, Bldg 237 Mesa, AZ 85206-0910	(602) 222-6568

Tucson VA Medical Center	3601 S. 6 th Ave Tucson, AZ 85723	(520) 792-1450 1-800-470-8262
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Yuma VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic	2555 Gila Ridge Road Yuma, AZ 85365	1-800-470-8262
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VET CENTERS

77 East Weldon Phoenix, AZ 85012	(602) 640-2981
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3055 N. 1 st Avenue Tucson, AZ 85719	(520) 882-0333
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161 S. Granite, Suite B Prescott, AZ 86301	1-800-547-7018 (520) 778-3469 (520) 778-4783
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P.O. Box 267 Keams Canyon, AZ 86034	(520) 674-3682
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P.O. Box 1934 Chinle, AZ 86503	(520) 674-3682
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CEMETERIES

VA

National Memorial Cemetery of AZ 23029 N. Cave Creek Road Phoenix, AZ 85024	(480) 513-3600
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STATE of ARIZONA

Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery 1300 Buffalo Soldier Trail Sierra Vista, AZ 85635	(520) 458-7144
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DEPARTMENT OFFICES

FLAGSTAFF

2705 N. 4TH Street, Suite B
Flagstaff, Arizona 86004-1846
(928) 779-4166, FAX (928) 779-4166

LAKE HAVASU CITY

285 S. Lake Havasu Ave., Suite A
Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403-6502
(928) 505-4616, FAX (928) 505-4622

PHOENIX

3333 N. Central Ave., Suite 1052
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
(602) 627-3261, FAX (602) 627-3275
1-800-852-8387

PRESCOTT

VA Medical Center
500 Hwy 89 N. Bldg., 107, Room 132
Prescott, Arizona 86313
(928) 776-6127, FAX (928) 717-7412

SIERRA VISTA

1300 Buffalo Soldier Trail
Sierra Vista, Arizona 85635
(520) 458-7144, FAX (520) 458-7147
1-888-952-4700

TUCSON

Professional Plaza East
626 North Craycroft Road, Suite 116
Tucson, Arizona 85711
(520) 207-4960 ext. 1, FAX (520) 207-4961

YUMA

2811 s. 4TH Avenue, Suite D
Yuma, Arizona 86364-8125
(928) 726-2851, FAX (928) 726-2866

VETERANS SERVICE DIVISION-AMERICAN LEGION OFFICE-PHOENIX

3333 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1048
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
(602) 627-3281, FAX (602) 627-3285

